

INDEXA



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A non-profit organization for the enhancement of amateur radio, worldwide peace, and friendship
Daily Information Session—14.236 @ 23:30Z

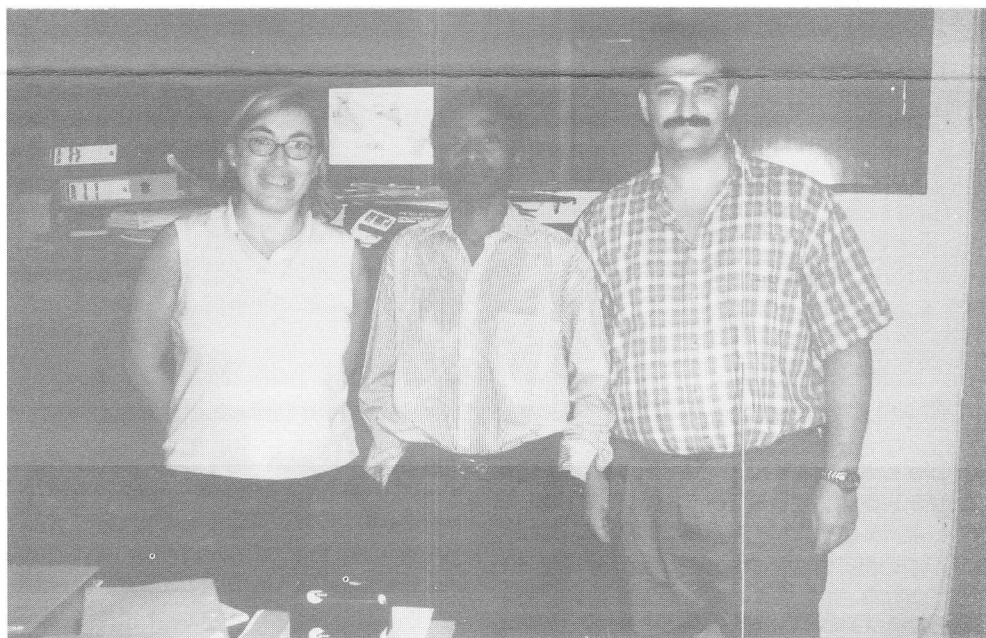
Comoros 2001—D68BT and D68WL

by Núria Font, EA3WL, and Josep Gibert, EA3BT

Many believed it couldn't be done! How could two lone EA stations achieve so much? Fortunately for those who supported our project, we proved the skeptics wrong. They lowered their heads and recognized that D68BT and D68WL made a great exit with 24,500 QSOs, no dupes, and hundreds of messages from around the world acknowledging success.

This operation did not come together overnight. Comoros, a tiny country situated in the Indian Ocean, had been in our thoughts for a long time. We intended to operate from Comoros in 1999 but the political situation caused us to change our plans. We postponed our trip until 2000 and went to Montserrat Island instead. In May of 2000 there was a new threat of political instability and later some health problems that obliged us to once again postpone until January, 2001.

We dedicated several months and most of our spare time to organizing licenses, permissions, and more important, logistics. We realized that we were limited because there were only the two of us; however, we wanted this to be a full DXpedition with maximum repercussion among the international ham radio community, not just a simple holiday journey with some radio operation as some might think. So we made plans to take two complete stations and have them on the air simultaneously as



Núria, D68WL, (left) and Josep, D68BT, (right) collecting their licenses at the SNPT of Moroni

many hours as possible. We also dedicated a lot of hours to designing our web page where information about our activity could be found as well as on-line logs for during and after the operation.

Finally, the day of departure arrived. On January 12th, 2001, Pere, EA3AJI, took us to the airport of Barcelona after putting all 125 kg of luggage inside the boot of his car. The luggage consisted of 2 transceivers, a linear amplifier, 2 switched power supplies, 3 laptops, a 3-element beam for 10, 15, and 20 meters, a vertical antenna for 40 and 80 meters, another vertical antenna for the WARC bands and a 2-element home-

made antenna for 6 meters. We also took more than 100 meters of coaxial wire, ropes, masts, tools, etc. We checked everything in and started the course that would take us to our destiny.

After a journey of more than 24 hours and 3 different planes, on January 13th we landed at the Moroni International Airport. We went directly to the hotel and immediately started to install the first station. It was 1630z when Josep threw the first "CQ CQ de D68BT, QRZ?" on 14.195. When he released the mike a

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Josep, D68WL, and Núria, D68WL, operating from Comoros Island

terrible mess was formed. It seemed that people were waiting for us so he had to start working split. The rhythm was frantic and the number of QSOs quickly increased in our log. We alternated both callsigns, D68BT and D68WL, but during the first day we only worked in the 20m band because the pile-up didn't decrease and we wanted to give the "new-one" to the maximum possible number of hams. With just a little rest for dinner, we came back to continue and the pile-up continued. We didn't go to sleep until 3 a.m. when we couldn't continue anymore. We hadn't slept in nearly 48 hours! The next day we continued to install the rest of the antennas and put the second station on the air.

The goal of this operation was to give the opportunity of a "new one" to the maximum possible number of people. For that reason, the main station was continually operating in 10, 15, or 20 meters, and we didn't abandon a band until the pile-ups stopped or the conditions disappeared (it was usually the latter). During the first week the amount of QSOs increased at a good pace. The WARC bands were activated simultaneously with the second station which had a

transceiver with only 100 watts output. From time to time, Josep tried to operate in CW but the chaos was great and the collaboration was null so he had to go QRT many times.

We advised that this operation would be in SSB and RTTY with sporadic CW. During the second weekend we started to work RTTY.

And the days passed by. The QSO number increased in our log and the pile-ups continued to be considerable. During the second week the propagation conditions weren't as good as during the first one, mainly during the mornings, although during the afternoon the expectation was still great.

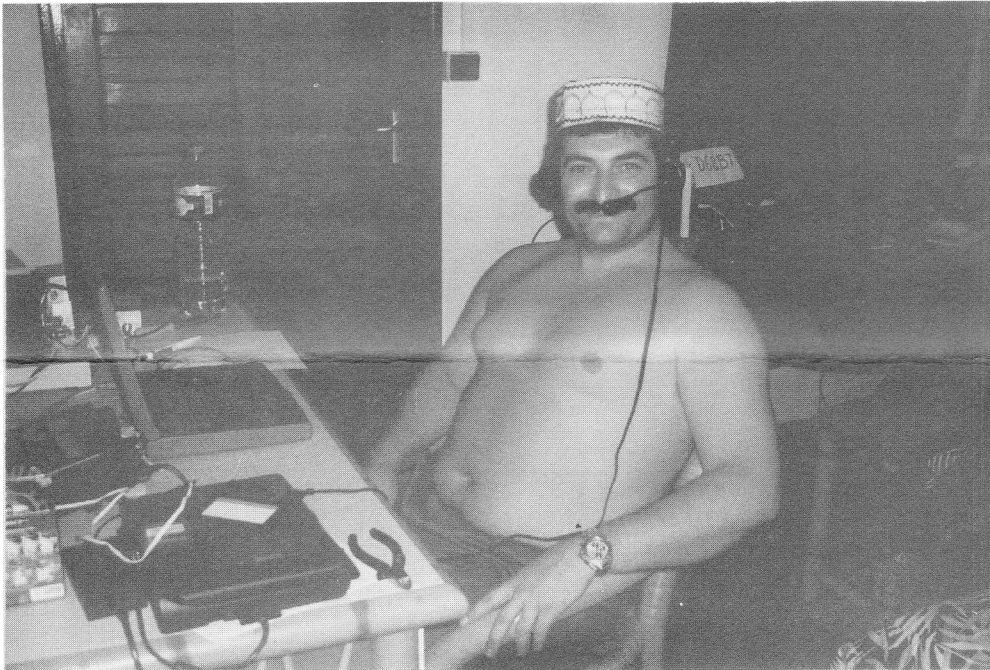
All good things must come to an end and we had to go QRT on Sunday, January 28th at 1200z. But we were happy with our great achievement: 24,500 QSOs in 16 days and only 2 people!

Here is some data about our operation:

- Callsigns used: D68BT & D68WL
- QSL information: Via EA3BT
- Logs available at:
<<http://www.qsl.net/ea3bt>>
- Total number of QSOs (without dupes): 24,500
- Days of operation: 15 days
- Modes: SSB, RTTY, & CW



A view of the Friday mosque in Moroni



Josep, operating as D68BT, wearing a typical Comorian hat

- Activated bands: 6, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 30, 40 & 80 meters

We want to thank INDEXA and all the associations and people that gave support to this project. And to everybody, TNX. We look forward to hearing you once again from!!!



Núria, EA3WL, operating as D68WL



A view of the sponsors' flags

IRCs or dollars?

The question is perennial: Should I send IRCs or should I send green-stamps?

IRCs should be used in countries where there is a high probability of tampering; i.e., in some parts of Russia, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Columbia, Libya, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, etc.

IRCs are not good in the following countries: Lebanon, Libya, Taiwan.

Do not send IRCs to Laos and remember that dollars are illegal in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

A QSL card from Germany requires one IRC or two dollars. Two IRCs or \$2.00 are needed for Switzerland.

Up-to-date information is available on the INDEXA daily information session on 14.236 at 2330z. When in doubt, drop by and ask the staff members.

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K3VN

W6BGK

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K4KXO

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Please vote and return your ballot to the election officer no later than September 30, 2001.

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DXPEDITIONING BASICS

by
Wayne Mills, N7NG

A DXpedition manual co-published by
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